

Testimony of Joseph Wasserman of Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice

Before the Connecticut General Assembly Environment Committee

February 28, 2014

Testimony in support of Raised Bill 67

First I would like to thank all the members of the Environment Committee for the opportunity to give testimony today.

My name is Joseph Wasserman and I am a community organizer with Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice or CCEJ. I am here to testify in favor of Raised Bill 67 An Act Concerning the Inclusion of Juices, Teas, and Sports Drinks under Connecticut's Bottle Bill and for strengthening it.

I would like to report that the Hartford City Council has just passed a resolution calling for legislation to update the bottle bill to include all single serving containers and liquor containers. The resolution notes the unnecessary trashing of 300 million recyclable bottles in our state, per year, and raises a strong concern about the incineration of recyclable bottles in the Hartford Trash Incinerator, that result in dangerous toxins breathed in every day by Hartford residents. The resolution also points to redemption as an important source of income for many residents of Hartford.

The towns of Mansfield and Windham have also passed similar resolutions calling on the General Assembly to update the bottle bill

Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice urges that the Environment Committee pass Raised Bill 67 and strengthen it to include liquor nips, liquor and wine bottles as well as all single serving beverages. This is critical in that these are the beverage containers that all too often litter our cities and roads and need to be recycled.

We also ask that the handling fee be raised to 3.5 cents, to better cover the costs for stores and redemption centers and allow them to continue operating

Containers covered by the bottle bill are recycled at a 70% rate. Containers not covered by the bottle bill are only recycled at a 25%. Expanding the bottle bill means less toxic incineration of trash, less litter and more recycling.

Thank you